

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A folding knife, comprising:

a handle;

a blade pivotally connected to the handle; and

a locking mechanism connected to the handle to lock the blade in a closed position;

wherein the locking mechanism is pivotally connected to the handle for locking the blade in the closed position;

wherein the locking mechanism and a protrusion are located near a base portion of the blade; and

wherein the protrusion extends from the handle and the locking mechanism further includes a recess for mating with the protrusion when the locking mechanism is in a locked position[[-]]; and

wherein the locking mechanism further includes a male portion for mating with a blade female portion when the blade is in a closed position and when the locking mechanism is in a locked position.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism further includes a tab for manipulating the locking mechanism.

7. (Original) The folding knife according to claim 6, wherein the locking mechanism further includes a pivot pin for rotation within the handle.

8. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to Claim 1, wherein the protrusion extends inward from the handle.

9-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A folding knife, comprising:  
a housing for housing a blade when the blade is in a folded position;  
the blade pivotally connected to the housing; and  
a locking mechanism pivotally connected to the housing for locking the blade in a closed position;

wherein the locking mechanism and a protrusion are located near a base portion of the blade;

wherein the protrusion extends inward from the housing; and

wherein the locking mechanism further includes a tab for manipulating the locking mechanism[[.]];

wherein the locking mechanism further includes a recess for mating with the protrusion; and

wherein the locking mechanism engages the blade directly when locking the blade in a closed position.

12. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 11, wherein the locking mechanism further includes a male portion for mating with a blade female portion when the blade is in the closed position and when the locking mechanism is in a locked position.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 12, wherein the locking mechanism further includes a pivot pin for rotation within the housing.

15. (Original) The folding knife according to claim 12 wherein the locking mechanism is further configured to be re-positioned in the locked position when the blade is in a fully open position.

16. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 15 wherein the blade includes a tang configured to displace the locking mechanism from the locked position when the blade is returned from the fully open position to the closed position.

17. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 11, wherein the locking mechanism further includes a male portion configured to align with a female portion when the blade is in the closed position, the female portion positioned on a same side as a blade edge.

18. (Currently amended) A folding knife, comprising:  
a handle with opposing sides to define an opening for housing a blade when the blade is in a folded position;

a protrusion extending from one of the opposing sides into the opening;  
the blade pivotally connected to the handle; and

a locking mechanism pivotally connected to the handle for locking the blade in a closed position, the locking mechanism having a recess for mating with the protrusion when the locking mechanism is in a locked position; and

wherein the locking mechanism and the protrusion are located near a base portion of the blade[[-]]; and

wherein the locking mechanism further includes a portion for interfitting with a blade portion when the blade is in a closed position and when the locking mechanism is in a locked position.

19. (Previously presented) A folding knife, comprising:

a handle with opposing sides to define an opening for housing a blade when the blade is in a folded position;

a protrusion extending from one of the handle opposing sides into the opening; the blade pivotally connected to the handle, the blade having a female portion;

and

a locking mechanism pivotally connected to the handle for locking the blade in a closed position, the locking mechanism having a male portion for mating with the blade female portion when the blade is in the closed position, and the locking mechanism further having a recess for mating with the protrusion when the locking mechanism is in a locked position; and wherein the locking mechanism and the protrusion are located near a base portion of the blade.

20. (Original) The folding knife according to claim 19, wherein the female portion of the blade is positioned along a sharpened edge side of the blade.

21. (Previously presented) The folding knife according to claim 19, wherein the locking mechanism is configured to be repositioned to the locked position when the blade is in a fully open position.

22. (Currently amended) A method for locking a blade in a folding knife in a closed position, comprising:

retracting the blade into a housing for storing the blade when it is in the closed position;

positioning a locking mechanism into a locked position by pivoting the locking mechanism so that a portion of the locking mechanism interfits directly with a portion of the blade, wherein the locking mechanism and a protrusion are located near a base portion of the blade; and

temporarily locking the locking mechanism into place by a recess interfitting with the protrusion extending from the housing.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously presented) A folding knife, comprising:  
a handle with opposing sides to define an opening for housing a blade when the  
blade is in a folded position;  
a protrusion extending from one of the handle opposing sides into the opening;  
the blade pivotally connected to the handle, the blade having a female portion;  
wherein the female portion of the blade is positioned along a sharpened edge side of the blade  
and  
a locking mechanism pivotally connected to the handle for locking the blade in a  
closed position, the locking mechanism having a male portion for mating with the blade female  
portion when the blade is in the closed position, and the locking mechanism further having a  
recess for mating with the protrusion when the locking mechanism is in a locked position; and  
wherein the locking mechanism and the protrusion are located near a base portion  
of the blade and said locking mechanism is configured to be repositioned to the locked position  
when the blade is in a fully open position.